Whistleblowing, libel and slander

THERE is no London Freelance Branch meeting in August: the Branch is attempting to take the nearest freelance equivalent of a holiday. Those of you who work regular shifts and receive holiday pay, please remember actually to take some time off: see www.londonfreelance.org/fl/0711work.html on your possible right to holiday pay.

Whistleblowers, and working with them, is the subject of the LFB meeting on Monday 12 September. Our speakers are Private Eye’s Andrew Bousfield – co-author of the recent Eye whistleblowing special supplement – and Cathy James of Public Concern At Work (www.pcacw.co.uk).

We expect to cover some of the practical aspects of receiving whistleblowers’ material and protection of sensitive sources. Cathy will discuss the limited protection for whistleblowers in current legislation, and talk about the campaigns to strengthen “public interest disclosure” laws.

The meeting on Monday 10 October will probably discuss reform of defamation (libel and slander) law, especially the reform bill before Parliament (see www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1102libe.html). Details of speakers will follow.

The planned LFB meeting featuring senior representatives of the Metropolitan Police is postponed to some time in late autumn at the earliest, as the Met’s remaining cadre were a bit busy as we went to press. Watch this space.

Enfield agreement

I would like to correct a misapprehension that I hope hasn’t become widespread: the loss of freelance cover has absolutely nothing to do with our agreement with the NUJ chapel at North London & Herts reached with Tindle (Newspapers) recently. (See www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1107strik.html)

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WOMEN’S VIEWS ON NEWS (www.womensviewsonnews.org), a non-profit, daily women’s news site is looking for a volunteer sub-editor for two days a week to sub-edit stories submitted to our newswire blog, which operates to counter the bias against women in the mainstream press. Contact Alison.Clarke@womensviewsonnews.org

LFB meetings are 7pm to 9pm at Friends’ House, Euston Road, which is accessible to people who use wheelchairs. If you need the Branch to pay for care for a child or dependent so you can attend a meeting, call a Branch officer. For updates on meetings see the Branch calendar web page www.londonfreelance.org/flb/meetings.html

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